

# Japan Christian Activity News

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## JUBILEE YEAR PEACE AND REUNIFICATION

### Tokyo Meeting Agreements

#### Aspiring Toward the Jubilee Year of Peace and Reunification of South and North Korea

ve delegates from the Korean Christian  
deration of the People's Republic of  
rea were invited by the Korean Christian  
urch in Japan to a meeting concerning  
ristian mission and the peace and  
unification of the Korean peninsula,  
ld July 10-13, 1990.

ne meeting was convened with 80 people in  
attendance at the YMCA Asia Youth Center  
Tokyo, the location where began the  
bruary 8, 1919 Korean independence  
ovement against Japan's aggressive  
olicies towards Asia. This meeting is a  
art of continuing ecumenical efforts  
concerning Korean reunification initiated  
y the World Council of Churches, Geneva,  
a September, 1986.

legates from the World Council of  
urches, the Christian Conference of  
sia, NCCC-USA and UCC-Canada participated  
a four discussion sessions, three Bible  
udies and a public meeting in order to  
eepen our understanding of unification  
and peace of the Korean peninsula.

ne Gospel is heard among the people who  
ave been divided by Japan's humiliating  
olonial policies. The reconciliation  
etween South and North Koreans has  
reated new hope among Koreans in Japan  
ho were forced into a valley of  
ntagonistic relations amidst a divided  
orld.

This fellowship was an opportunity to heal  
the pain of a divided world, sharing our  
suffering under the division, our hopeful  
wishes for a unified country, and our  
passion for reunification through love for  
the Korean people.



NCC/J Staff & N. Korean Delegates

We reconfirmed the November, 1989 Glion  
Declaration on Peace and the Reunification  
of Korea. To pursue joint projects for  
realizing the 1995 Jubilee year, we made  
the following commitments to action:

1) We affirm the joy of sharing our  
belief in the reconciliation and  
coexistence of both South and North  
Koreans in the 1995 Jubilee year. We  
repent our sins of ignoring or justifying  
the tragic realities of the division of  
people by the antagonistic relations  
between the South and North. Churches in  
both South and North will join in prayer  
to repent of this sin created by the  
historical reality of division among  
people.

2) We wish that the closed wall between  
the South and North will be destroyed so  
that people may freely travel, and total  
liberation will come to the land. We seek  
the elimination of all hindrances to unity  
and institutional measures which prevent  
such freedom. We believe that the  
separated families of the South and North  
will be united in the near future. We hope

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that the people who are working for the reunification of Koreans, and who have been captured within the conditions of structural evil, will be freed by their decision and that such will bring reunification to the Korean peninsula.

3) As in the Glion Declaration, we affirm a "radical reduction of military forces, weapons and facilities in order to reduce tension and avoid military confrontation, thereby eliminating a major threat to the peace and reunification of Korea. For this, the present armistice agreement should be replaced by a peace treaty, a non-aggression declaration should be agreed upon, and substantial guarantees for peace and security should be provided for the entire Korean peninsula. On the basis of such measures, all foreign forces in South Korea must be withdrawn, the United Nations Command in South Korea must be dissolved, and all nuclear weapons deployed in or targeted upon the Korean peninsula must be removed." (Recommendation 6)

4) We hope that agreements stemming from dialogue between South and North Korean government officials will be reached as soon as possible. We wish this to be followed by autonomy for the Korean people. Furthermore, we hope that the churches of the South and North will be able to speak with each other freely to help bring salvation through the Gospel and peace and reconciliation to the people. With the Jubilee year in 1995 as our goal, we will undertake joint action by mutual agreement, year by year.

5) With the Koreans in Japan, South and North Koreans will strengthen the unity of a faith community and exchange information in preparation of various worship services for the peace and reunification of Korea, beginning from Peace Sunday, the Sunday prior to August 15, or Liberation Day.

6) We hope that dialogue between the churches of the South and North will continue freely between Seoul and Pyongyang in order to initiate actions for mission cooperation by and for Koreans and Korean churches.

7) Together with brothers and sisters who have continuously supported peace and

reunification of Korea, we continue efforts for reconciliation and for the autonomous reunification of Korea. We believe that this participation in bringing about peace and the reunification of the Korean peninsula will be a witness to peace in the world.

(TRANSLATION/SUMMARY FROM THE JAPANESE BY JCAN)

## QUESTIONING THE EMPEROR SYSTEM

### IN THE NATIONAL DIET

*Yasuko Takemura, Upper House Diet member from Hokkaido, questioned the Upper House Budget Committee on May 21, 1989 concerning the use of public funds for the enthronement ceremonies of Akihito in November this year (Sokuino-rei and Daijosai). The following is a translation and summary of her inquiries and the responses offered by government officials*

#### Takemura:

Regarding the government statement of December 21, 1989, what are the Sokuino-rei and Daijosai ceremonies, and how did you make these determinations?



#### Mr. Sakamoto

(Minister of State Affairs):

On September 26, 1989, a preparation committee was set up with the Chief Cabinet Secretary as chair. The 15-member committee met four times to discuss what ceremonies should be performed, considering both guidelines of the Constitution and traditions of the imperial family. The findings were reported to the Cabinet on December 21, 1989.

There will be three ceremonies related to the Sokuino-rei. First is the public proclamation of the Tenno's enthronement before the attending delegates from Japan



foreign countries. Second will be the celebration march and third the banquet. There will be 2,500 delegates invited to the proclamation and 3,400 at the banquet.

Daijosai is rooted in the old traditions of Japan's rice-farming culture. After the Sokuino-rei, the Tenno will offer new rice to Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess and origin of the imperial line, as well as all other gods. Following imperial tradition, the Tenno will eat rice with the gods and pray for the safe and abundant harvest of the five different rice grains.

Since the ceremony is religious in nature, some feel that the Daijosai should not be a national affair. This, however, is the most important ceremony for succession to the imperial throne. Thus it should be in the national interest, and the government should facilitate it in any way possible. This includes paying expenses for the ceremony.

**Takemura:**

Will all related ceremonies be performed by Shinto officiates?

**Miyao (a government official):**

These are all religious ceremonies.

**Takemura:**

The government is paying for all expenses related to the ceremonies. Isn't this violating the principle of religious freedom as defined in the Constitution?

**Kudo (a government official):**

The Sokuino-rei is one of the national ceremonies which is stipulated in the constitution. We are not imposing it on the people. The Daijosai is a traditional ceremony of imperial succession and should be a public affair.

**Takemura:**

When all celebrations will be carried out in non-religious ways?

**Kudo:**

Sokuino-rei has no religious character.

**Takemura:**

What of Daijosai?

**Miyao:**

The Daijosai will be held at the Imperial Palace on November 22-23. The ceremony will be defined as a tradition of the Imperial Household. Specific plans will be decided later.

**Takemura:**

The Daijosai sounds like a very mysterious ceremony. The Takamikura (Imperial Throne) with its octagonal roof symbolizes the line of succession from Amaterasu. I understand that this is a Shinto ceremony of the Imperial Household. Why then should this be a public affair? Why pay public taxes for these ceremonies?

**Miyao:**

The preparation committee concluded that the Daijosai is of a public nature.

**Takemura:**

This is the first time the Daijosai will be conducted under a constitution which proclaims the Tenno as a national symbol (rather than a god in human form). Whatever we decide about this now will set significant precedents for the future. Is it necessary for the Tenno, who claims to be human and not a god, to proceed with this ceremony, the historic purpose of which is to lift him to the level of a god?

**Miyao:**

There are many academic theories concerning the Daijosai. Our understanding is that it is the ceremony during which the new emperor offers new rice to Amaterasu and all shrines, and he also eats.

**Takemura:**

So the Tenno, who claims to be human, needs the Daijosai ceremony. What does the Tenno himself think of this?



**Mr. Kaifu (Prime Minister):**

Article 1 of the Constitution states that the Tenno is a symbol of the State, and that his position is based upon the will of the people. The enthronement ceremony is part of the process for proclaiming the Tenno's status, which is legitimized by the will of the people. Therefore, we solemnly welcome this ceremony.

**Takemura:**

I have asked Mr. Shigenori Nishikawa to comment on the government's statement concerning the Sokuino-rei and Daijosai.

**Mr. Nishikawa:**

I have been struggling with the issues of separation of religion and state. The preparation committee met four times last November. However, by the second meeting, newspapers had already announced the government's position on the Sokuino-rei and Daijosai. I wondered then about the purposes of those meetings. I questioned whether or not the government's position had already been decided before the committee was ever formed.

**Takemura:**

What is your understanding of the role of the Tenno in public activities?

**Nishikawa:**

Article 1 of the Constitution stipulates that the Tenno shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people. His position is derived according to the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power. The government itself has said that national ceremonies should not be of a religious nature. Yet the Daijosai and related ceremonies have not been kept as private matters of the Imperial Household. Rather they have been designated as official ceremonies requiring government facilitation.

The Daijosai, having religious implications, cannot be held as a national affair because this would violate Article 1 of the Constitution. Thus it has been designated as a "public activity" of the Tenno, which does not fall under

observance to Article 1.

**Takemura:**

Please give us your understanding of principles of religious freedom separation of religion and state.

**Nishikawa:**

The Sokuino-rei and Daijosai have not been publicly discussed by the government as an issue in relation to the constitutional principle of separation of religion and state. The government has, from the beginning, handled this matter with the presumption that the ceremonies would not be judged in violation of that principle. The principle of religious freedom in Japan is necessary in order that we may evaluate what Japan has done in our past to other Asian countries. Religious freedom and separation of religion and state should be discussed within the context of what type of relationship Japan should establish with other Asian countries.

**Takemura:**

(to the government officials) Please itemize for us the total expenses for the ceremonies which the government is asking of the Budget Committee.

**Mr. Hashimoto (Secretary of State):**

The Sokuino-rei will cost 1.43 billion yen, related celebrations are 120 million yen, public relations 542 million yen, media recording 427 million yen, administration expenses 428 million yen. The Daijosai will cost 1.83 billion yen. Imperial Household expenses 12 million yen, police security 1.17 billion yen, Foreign Affairs Ministry expenses 90 million yen. The total cost will be 8.3 billion yen (\$54 million).

**Takemura:**

During World War II, more than 18 million people throughout Asia were killed by the Japanese Imperial Army in the name of the Tenno. In these same countries, so many people are presently suffering from poverty. Every day, more than 50,000 children are dying from starvation.



Knowing this reality, it is difficult to understand why Japan will be spending 8 billion yen for the enthronement of the new Tenno.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister whether you think that the Pacific War was a holy war of Japanese invasion into other Asian countries?

Wifu:

recognize the fact of Japan's invasion into other countries during that period.

### **AINU HUMAN RIGHTS THE STRUGGLE OVER LAND**

#### **Seeking the Restoration of the Ainu People**

YOSHIHISA MASAHIKO, JOURNALIST  
YAH! NEWSPAPERS

Hokkaido is a large island located in the northern part of Japan. Before the Japanese people invaded the land it was called "Ainumoshiri", meaning peaceful land of the Ainu (in the Ainu language the word "Ainu" means human being). The Ainu people lived with gods of their own and worshipped the sacred holiness of nature. Conflicts between the Japanese and Ainu people began in 1496 when a young Ainu man was killed by the Japanese. From 1869, the Meiji government repeated its strategic invasions and exploitation of the Ainu. These methods of exploitation were related to the question of land.

The Japanese government took over Ainu land by setting up legislation which took advantage of the fact that the Ainu did not have a concept of personal property. In so doing the government forced its land policy by granting land to the Ainu on a rental basis.

After the Meiji restoration in 1868 the central government decided, without consultation with the Ainu, that there were no land owners in Hokkaido and proceeded to designate the land as imperial property. The following land

laws were issued: 1872 - general land law, 1873 - land tax and reformed law, 1877 - land certificate law. Through establishing these laws all the land titles came under government possession.

In 1899 the government issued the Hokkaido Original Natives Protection Law, which still exists today. This law served to finalize the government's exploitative agricultural policies. The first article of the law says that the government will grant, free of cost, land in the amount of 15,000 tsubo (49,500 square meters) per family to those original natives who work as farmers, further stating that land which isn't developed for agriculture after fifteen years will be confiscated.

The government, which originally took away the Ainu's land, was again seeking to control and exploit the Ainu by applying laws which they termed as laws protecting the Ainu people under the authority of the government. Yet, this land was to be taken away after 15 years if the land was not used for agricultural purposes. Most of the land available to the Ainu was not suitable for farming, with sharply sloping hills or overgrown.

Originally the Ainu were hunters. Their lifestyle was meant to be in harmony with nature which provided many blessings to the people. Therefore farming was unnecessary to the traditional way of life. Implementation of the land laws was only a way to create a new means of exploitation - hiding the reality with laws which "protected" the Ainu people.

Land located on the eastern side of Hokkaido called Akkeshi was home to the Ainu. There were excellent ports; the salmon travelled upstream and bears lived in the mountains. The Ainu enjoyed a peaceful life together with their gods.

In the beginning of the 19th century, in the area under the control of the Saga clan of the Tokugawa government, the Ainu population decreased. And as a result of the new agricultural policies many became poor.

According to a government report of 1878, 10 Ainu used the coastal land to gather and dry kelp as a means of income. But as



the management of the land was not successful they appealed for a grant of industrial capital funds to sustain their livelihood.

Mr. Monsuke Oota, a pioneer of Ainu concerns who lived in the Akkeshi area, proposed that the profit from the endeavor be shared mutually; this then became the basis for the mutual ownership of land. This concept became the root of savings and loan regulations for Ainu in the Akkeshi area in 1882.

Mr. Monsuke proposed that government officials transfer land rights to the Ainu in Akkeshi. The 36 people using the land were divided into six groups, with the work relating to the kelp collection rotated among the six. Each person paid a fee for land use to the local office who kept it in savings. This money was used as the capital for the Ainu people's loan. He organized a people's union in order to administer and supervise the land and became the chairperson of the union.

After Mr. Monsuke's death in 1892 the practice of mutual land use came to an end. Some of the Ainu gave up their land rights to the Japanese as result of the poverty which permeated the area.

Article 1 of the Hokkaido Protection Law for Original Natives states that the governor of Hokkaido should administer the shared ownership of the properties of the original natives of Hokkaido. Moreover, Article 2 says that the governor can refuse, if necessary, changes in ownership and the division of land.

Article 8 indicates that expenses for the protection of Ainu institutions should be covered by profits from the properties of the Hokkaido natives and that the national budget will be used as a backup when there is an excessive shortage of funds. The land which the Ainu attempted to use to support their own livelihood is still under the supervision of the government bureaucracy.

In 1924 it was recorded that there were 24 shared properties in the Akkeshi area. A small island called "Pemoshiri" on Akkeshi bay was used by the Ainu people. But soon, this was taken by the Japanese and

the Ainu had to leave the island. Thirty three people purchased part of this island from the Japanese government in 1906 in order to find a means of survival. But in 1924 the land went under the control of the Hokkaido government. The Ainu owners formed a union and rented the land at a very low cost to the Japanese under a year contract.

Yet, in 1948 the government implemented new tax law which increased the tax paid on the land by a factor of three. The Ainu were not able to pay the tax and appealed to the governor of Hokkaido requesting permission to sell their land. In September 1951 the governor lifted his administrative power and the Ainu land was handed over to the Japanese.

The Ainu land was again taken away when in 1946 a special measure for farmland owners was issued. Claiming the ownership of the land was uncertain, the government took over the land, paying only a minimal fee and then sold it to Japanese tenants at the same price. Twenty years later the land was sold for 12,000 times the original price.

The Japanese government continuously exploited Hokkaido in various ways and the land was lent to the Ainu under the name of Ainu protection. But it was then taken away by new tax laws under the land reformation policy of the government. Only a small area was left for the Ainu to live. Once Hokkaido was the land of the Ainu people. Now they are crying out for the integrity of creation. In order to sustain their human dignity they are asking for the restoration of the land to the people.

The land issue is the backbone of the restoration of their human rights. The Ainu in Akkeshi are now standing up in solidarity with other struggling Ainu people and this movement is expanding throughout the whole land of "Ainumoshiri", the peaceful land of human beings.

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## ASHES OF DEATH

### Observation Report on the Disaster of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant

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#### Introduction:

From June 23 to July 4, 1990 I was able to visit the site of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in the USSR. Responding to a request from the Russian Orthodox Church, the World Council of Churches in Geneva initiated this visitation in order to observe the contamination related damage caused by the tragic accident and to identify measures for aid in the area. Dr. Taji Watanabe and I participated in this fact finding team.

Leaving Hiroshima on June 19 we went to Geneva and applied for a visa to the USSR with the three other members. We arrived in Moscow on June 23 and ended our visit on July 4. Then Mr. Watanabe and myself visited Geneva and came back to Japan on July 8.

The fact finding team members were Dr. Klaus Poser, Director of WCC Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugees, and World Service (Geneva), Mrs. Kenlynn K. Schroeder, Director of National Disaster Response, Church World Service, National Christian Church Council, USA (New York City) and Dr. Henry Frossard, Chef de Service Medical de Travail et de Conduite Médicale Cogema Metallurgie (Vignon). With the two of us the team was composed of five members.

#### The Disaster of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant

The explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Republic of Ukraine occurred on April 26, 1986. In August 1986 the government administration of the USSR announced that there were 31 dead and 13 acute radiation victims.

Later, we learned that the accident had adverse effects on a much wider scale; with twenty percent of the White Russian agricultural land or a 7,000 km<sup>2</sup> area with a population of over 2,200,000 people, contaminated by radiation.

Five out of the six states of White Russia were heavily contaminated with particularly severe contamination in the areas of Gomel and Mogilev.

Based on various sources of information presently available, the contamination in the Republic of White Russia (Byelorussia), the Russian Republic and the Ukraine is as follows:

Areas where the degree of cesium 137 contamination is over 15 Ci/km<sup>2</sup>

White Russia 7,000km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 2,400,000

Russian Republic 2,000km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 700,000

Ukraine 1,000km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 4,100,000

The children of White Russia have been seriously effected with their number being 400,000 among the 2,400,000 people.

In areas where cesium contamination is over 15 Ci/km<sup>2</sup>, 102,000 people (30,000 children) are living and in areas where the contamination is 40 Ci/km<sup>2</sup>, there are 12,000 people.

Right after the nuclear power plant explosion about 100,000 people moved out of the area contaminated to a level of 15 Ci/km<sup>2</sup>, and later another 100,000 people moved away.

Both the officials of White Russia and the USSR have been measuring the radiation levels and on that basis decided to move people out of said areas.

A national plan to meet the contingencies of the disaster between 1990 and 1995 will require about 18 billion rubles from the national budget. The costs of the contamination have already reached 72 billion rubles (30 Billion \$US).



The exodus from the contaminated areas has not been conducted smoothly and medical appliances and medicines are in extremely short supply. It is difficult for local governments to meet the needs for the high standard of medical treatment which are needed, sustaining supplies of food for victims, and creating security during mass movements of people. With these factors as background, the request from the Orthodox Church reached us.

### Observations:

Being based at Minsk, the capital of White Russia, the fact finding team visited the Mogilev and Gomel areas. In Minsk we visited Prof. Dr. W. A. Matyuchin, director of the Ministry of Health of the USSR, Institute of Radiation Medicine. He explained that the hospital, with 190 beds, treated about 4,000 adult victims and 6,000 children who continue to be troubled with disturbances of the thyroid gland, with some of them being hospitalized for observation.

### Research Needing Continuation:

1. Dosimetry for Land and Individuals
2. Victim Vital Statistics and Epidemiological Studies
3. Registration of Victims
4. Functional Organization for Diagnosis and Treatment
5. Prognosis and Sickness Developmental Studies

Questions asked by the visiting team related to birth malformations and spontaneous abortions or death. Questions relating to leukemia and malignant tumors will be answered on the basis of significant findings which are coming out in the fall of this year.

We received a map indicating the distribution of cesium 137, strontium 90 and plutonium 239 over the total area of White Russia.

We visited Chudiani village and measured the remaining radiation on the land along with village officials using the RKSB-104 and Cocha geiger-counters made in the USSR. We detected 300 Ci/km<sup>2</sup> while it was 2,000 Ci/km<sup>2</sup> right after the destruction of the power plant.

The following is a summary of findings from two interviews; one with the director of the village hospital and other with Dr. B.L. Alexandrovich, Deputy Director of the Institute of Biophysics, Ministry of Public Health, Academy of Medical Sciences in Moscow.

1. Although there were various opinions regarding what the final total contamination would be, ranging from million Ci through 50 million Ci and 120 million Ci, the final estimate about 12,000,000 Ci/km<sup>2</sup>.

2. The Cesium fall-out was wide spread but plutonium and strontium distribution was limited to the area immediately surrounding Chernobyl.

3. Epidemiological characteristics include high densities of cesium and iodine. Cesium goes easily to the soft tissues of the body through food and milk. The element I-131 accumulates in the thyroid glands of children. Some children showed 1,000 times the concentration seen under normal conditions. About 160,000 children who were exposed to more than 1 rem of radiation, were registered and observed carefully. Especially in the areas of Mogilev and Gomel the iodine levels were high even before the power plant explosion. There were many cases of endemic hyperthyroidism among children.

4. Before the disaster there were four to five spontaneous abortions at the hospital of Chudiani Village, but after the nuclear accident the number increased to eleven which is a doubling. Leukemia was not found. The victims who showed indications of being exposed to between 100 and 1,000 Ci/km<sup>2</sup> were hospitalized. The level of cesium at the hospital was 7 Ci/km<sup>2</sup>.

5. Sicknesses discovered were hyperthyroidism (one case of a malignant tumor of the thyroid gland was found among the children,) cardiovascular diseases including anemia, malnutrition, bronchitis, and hypertension. The relationships between radiation contamination and other sicknesses have not been clarified except in the case of hyperthyroidism. (To be Continued)